

October 21, 2002

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Homeland Security

Supervisor Don Knabe has been named by Homeland Security Advisor, Tom Ridge, to serve on the State and Local Officials Senior Advisory Committee, an eight member body that will advise the White House on local strategies for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks. Supervisor Knabe is the only Californian appointed to the committee, which will be chaired by Utah Governor, Michael Leavitt and Washington, D.C. Mayor, Anthony Williams. Other members are from Alabama, Florida, Oklahoma, Ohio, and Texas. The committee is expected to meet four to six times a year and identify security programs across the country that can be replicated at the national level. Attached is an article from the Copley News Service that announces Supervisor Knabe's appointment.

Congressional Recess

Congress has recessed until November 12, 2002. Last week, it adopted a bill extending Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003 funding for federal departments and programs through November 22, 2002. Upon their return, the congressional leadership will decide whether it can break the gridlock in the appropriations process or if it should adopt a continuing resolution funding the government through the early part of 2003.

Before it recessed, Congress adopted two of the 13 appropriations bills (Defense and Military Construction) and sent them to the President for his signature. The House has passed only three other funding measures while the Senate has adopted one. None of the appropriations bills, containing County priority programs, have been adopted.

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All other major bills remain stalled, including the restoration of Medicaid cuts and the creation of a Homeland Security Department.

Election Reform

As reported to your Board on October 8, House and Senate conferees reached agreement on an election reform bill (H.R. 3295). The legislation passed both bodies last week and the measure is expected to be signed by the President. Designed to prevent electoral problems, like those that occurred in Florida, as well as the potential for voter fraud, the bill requires first-time voters to show valid identification. In States using a vote-by-mail system, a unique identifying number will be used to identify voters. The bill makes \$850 million available for state grants, as soon as the funds are appropriated, and authorizes an additional \$3 billion over three years following 2003. To be eligible for grants, States must develop plans for changing their voting systems and building statewide databases of registered voters. States must also provide one voting machine in each precinct for disabled voters; allow voters to check and correct errors on their ballot; allow voters whose eligibility is questioned to cast a provisional ballot, which will not be counted until the voter's eligibility is verified; and define in advance what constitutes a legal vote for each type of voting machine. Funding is still an uncertainty, as there is no funding for election reform included in any of the FFY 2003 appropriations bills.

Health Program Reauthorization

Last week, the House and Senate adopted a bill (S. 1533) to reauthorize a number of health programs. As reported to your Board on October 2, 2002, the measure reauthorizes community health centers programs and the National Health Service Corps which provides financial incentives to health professionals willing to practice in medically underserved areas. It also authorizes the Communities Access Program which provides grants to networks of providers to improve the delivery of health care. The President is expected to sign the bill.

We will continue to keep you advised of any new developments.

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Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisor
County Counsel
All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist

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Attachment

South Bay supervisor named to national panel on terrorism

By David Zahniser
COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

County Supervisor Don Knabe has been appointed to a national panel that will advise the White House on local strategies for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks, officials said Thursday.

Knabe, a Republican who represents much of the South Bay, was the only Californian named by Homeland Security Advisor Tom Ridge to serve on the State and Local Officials Senior Advisory Committee.

During the committee's first meeting on Wednesday, Knabe emphasized the strategic importance of keeping open Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, the South Bay's only trauma center.

"Governor Ridge spent quite a bit of time on public health and how it relates to this war on terrorism," Knabe said. "And I gave the example of what we're trying to deal

with here, and the fact that Harbor-UCLA will be absolutely critical."

Both Knabe and U.S. Rep. Jane Harman, D-Redondo Beach, have cited homeland security as a primary reason for preserving Harbor-UCLA, one of two county hospitals that face possible closure. Harbor-UCLA is near such terrorist targets as Los Angeles International Airport and the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Knabe's appointment provided encouraging news for backers of Harbor-UCLA, who say he will provide a much-needed Republican voice on the issue at the Bush White House, which is deciding whether to provide additional funding for the county's health system.

The county Board of Supervisors is scheduled to decide Oct. 29 whether to close Harbor-UCLA, with federal funding seen as the only way the hospital will remain open.

"I think he's a key appointee. I think this is excellent," said Los Angeles City Councilwoman Janice Hahn, whose district is served by Harbor-UCLA. "This is the first time I've felt hope that emergency response

will be part of the homeland security package."

Knabe is one of eight members on the committee, which will submit advice to President Bush's Homeland Security Advisory Council. The committee is expected to meet four to six times a year and identify security programs across the nation that can be replicated at the national level, said Frank Cilluffo, an adviser to President Bush.

"Obviously, some of the details are not fully ironed out, but the purpose of this group is to reach out to leaders in our communities at the state and local level," he said.

The committee will be chaired by Utah Gov. Michael Leavitt and Washington, D.C., Mayor Anthony Williams. Other members are from Alabama, Florida, Oklahoma, Ohio and Texas.

Harman praised Ridge's appointment of Knabe. But with homeland security stalled in Congress, Harman said it is unclear whether the committee will have the power to help Harbor-UCLA.

"It is way too early to know," she said.
"My priority is getting the homeland security department set up. That hasn't happened, and until we have one integrated national strategy for homeland security, the actions of Tom Ridge won't be at the level they need to be."

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